



# Academic Misconduct Policy

*(covering cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct)*

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Academic Integrity .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Principles underlying these regulations.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Definitions and examples .....</b>	<b>2</b>
3.1	Cheating.....	2
3.2	Plagiarism .....	3
3.3	Collusion .....	3
3.5	Personation.....	4
3.6	Ghosting including Contract Cheating .....	4
3.7	Other academic misconduct.....	4
<b>4</b>	<b>Procedures for taught programmes.....</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1	Stage 1: Procedure for in-course assessment.....	5
4.2	Initial procedure for examinations.....	6
4.3	Stage 2: Academic Misconduct .....	9
4.4	Action by Programme Assessment Boards .....	11
<b>5</b>	<b>Student's right of appeal .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1 Academic Integrity

- 1.1 Every student of the University is expected to act with integrity in relation to the production and representation of original academic work. Academic integrity is central to University life and requires in particular that students are honest and responsible in acknowledging the contributions of others in their work.
- 1.2 In all assessed work students should take care to ensure that the work presented is their own and that it fully acknowledges the work and opinions of others. It is also incumbent upon students to ensure that they do not undertake any form of cheating or gain unfair advantage in any other way.
- 1.3 In order to assure the University that the work is their own and that the work and opinions of others have been acknowledged, students must take care to follow the appropriate standards for academic practice in their subject. This includes:
- 1.4 Providing full citation of all sources (books, articles, web sites, newspapers, images, artefacts, data sources, programme code etc.) which have been drawn on in the preparation of an assignment. Normally this will be done in a bibliography included in the assignment.
- 1.5 Properly referencing the sources of the arguments and ideas in an assignment using a recognised referencing system (as specified in programme and module guidelines). It is not only quotations that must be referenced but also paraphrasing of the arguments of others and the use of their ideas, even if explained in the student's own words.
- 1.6 Following other guidelines for preparing and presenting coursework as defined in the relevant programme handbooks, assignment briefs and criteria.
- 1.7 Using mechanisms provided by the University for checking their own work, including Turnitin text matching software, Cite Them Right and the support and advice from the University Library.
- 1.8 Proof-reading entails the identification of grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes in text. The use of proof-reading or translation services may constitute academic misconduct if the service includes any editorial activity which entails re-writing or re-wording the student's original work beyond this.

## 2 Principles underlying these regulations

- 2.1 The work submitted by a student for assessment must have been undertaken by the student
- 2.2 It is acknowledged that minor, isolated, occasional, inaccurate and incomplete referencing, poor wording, style and presentation may give the impression of academic misconduct but it is not the intention that these regulations to be used for such minor infringements.
- 2.3 Academic misconduct also includes the attempt to breach any of these regulations so that, for example, a student who attempts to communicate with an unauthorised person during an examination could be in breach of the regulations even if they

were not successful in communicating.

- 2.4 The determination of whether cheating, plagiarism or other form of academic misconduct has occurred is not a matter for the Programme Assessment Board.
- 2.5 The facts must be established before a Programme Assessment Board can consider the effect of the alleged incident on a student's performance.
- 2.6 An allegation of cheating, plagiarism or other academic misconduct is not the same as proof of the incident.
- 2.7 Allegations of academic misconduct will be investigated with full regard to principles of equity and fairness.
- 2.8 The burden of proof shall rest on the person/s bringing the charge of academic misconduct. The standard of proof shall be 'the balance of probabilities'.
- 2.9 Once the facts have been established, it is then for the Programme Assessment Board to judge the seriousness of the case and to exercise discretion accordingly, having regard to institutional precedent where appropriate.
- 2.10 In order to properly and transparently investigate suspicions of academic misconduct all relevant information will be provided to both the student suspected of academic misconduct and those investigating the case. This may include work submitted by other students (who will be informed that their work is the subject of an academic misconduct investigation and may be shared with other students). Such materials, and any other information, will only be shared as deemed necessary by the investigators.

### **3 Definitions and examples**

There are different forms of "academic misconduct", all of which may be the subject of the procedures described below (Section 4). The following are different examples of academic misconduct but do not constitute an exhaustive list:

- 3.1 Cheating
  - 3.1.1 Communicating with or copying from any other student during examination except in so far as the examination regulations may specifically permit this, e.g. group assessments.
  - 3.1.2 Communicating during an examination with any person other than a properly authorised invigilator or another authorised member of staff.
  - 3.1.3 Introducing any written or printed materials into the examination room unless expressly permitted by the examination or programme regulations.
  - 3.1.4 Introducing any electronically stored information into the examination room, unless expressly permitted by the examination or programme regulations.
  - 3.1.5 Gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to an assessment.

### 3.2 Plagiarism

The unacknowledged incorporation in a student's work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. Examples of plagiarism are:

- 3.2.1 Subject to clause 2.2, the inclusion in a student's work of more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks and acknowledgement of the sources.
- 3.2.2 The summarising of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement.
- 3.2.3 The use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source.
- 3.2.4 The unacknowledged use of images (digital or otherwise) music, patents or other creative material either in the entirety or in the creation of a derivative work.
- 3.2.5 Copying the work of another student, with or without their knowledge or agreement. See also section 3.3, Collusion.
- 3.2.6 The unacknowledged re-submission of work the student had previously submitted to gain credit at this university or elsewhere.

### 3.3 Collusion

Collusion is defined as: When a student works with others on an assessment, which is then submitted as though it was solely that individual student's own work. In situations where students are required to work with others on an assessment, this will be clearly stated in the assessment guidelines and constitutes approved collaboration. Unless otherwise stated, work should be undertaken by one individual and collaboration is not permitted. A student who works with others to produce work that is then submitted as their own unaided work may be found to have colluded.

Collusion exists where a student:

- 3.3.1 Submits as their own, work done in collaboration with another person.
- 3.3.2 Collaborates with another student in the completion of work which is submitted as that other student's own unaided work.
- 3.3.3 Enables another student to copy all or part of his/her own work and to submit it as that student's own unaided work.

### 3.4 Falsification

Examples of falsification include:

- 3.4.1 The falsification of data. The presentation of data in laboratory reports, projects or other forms of assessment based on experimental or other work falsely purported to have been carried out by the student, or obtained by unfair means.



- 3.4.2 The falsification of references, including the invention of references and/or false claims.
- 3.4.3 The falsification of any information with a view to gaining unfair academic advantage.
- 3.5 Personation
  - 3.5.1 “Personation” is the legal term for what is usually referred to by the layperson as “impersonation”. Personation is thus the assumption by one person of the identity of another person with intent to deceive or to gain unfair advantage. It may exist where:
    - 3.5.2 One person assumes the identity of a student, with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for that student.
    - 3.5.3 The student is knowingly and willingly impersonated by another with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for himself/herself.
- 3.6 Ghosting including Contract Cheating
  - Ghosting exists where:
    - 3.6.1 A student submits as their own, work which has been produced in whole or part by another person on their behalf, e.g. the use of a ‘ghost writing’ service or similar. This is also often referred to as ‘contract cheating’ and covers the purchase of services from on-line essay writing sites.
    - 3.6.2 A student will also be guilty of academic misconduct if he/she deliberately makes available or seeks to make available material to another student (of this university or elsewhere) whether in exchange for financial gain or otherwise with the intention that the material is to be used by the other student to commit academic misconduct.
- 3.7 Other academic misconduct
  - 3.7.1 Any other form of academic misconduct not identified in the above examples.

## 4 Procedures for taught programmes

### 4.1 Stage 1: Procedure for in-course assessment

- 4.1.1 When academic misconduct is suspected, the member/s of academic staff concerned should first discuss the matter in a meeting with the student/s concerned and the Programme Leader for the student's programme (or other appropriate member of staff nominated by the Programme Leader) and give the student the opportunity to present his or her case. This process may also include conduct of a viva, with review and discussion of working papers, to establish a student's understanding of the work submitted.
- 4.1.2 The student/s should be given written notification of the time and place of the meeting, provided with details of the alleged academic misconduct and informed that they may be accompanied by a Friend<sup>1</sup> during the meeting.
- 4.1.3 Where a student is based in a particular institution overseas, the partner institution will take responsibility for the Stage 1 meeting.
- 4.1.4 If it is impractical for the meeting to be conducted on-site the Stage 1 meeting should be conducted via telephone or video link and recorded.
- 4.1.5 If the conclusion of the Stage 1 meeting is that academic misconduct has not occurred, this will be reported to the relevant Registrar using the Academic Misconduct Report Form and no further action will be taken. No report will be submitted to the Programme Assessment Board (PAB).
- 4.1.6 If the student admits to the academic misconduct, this should be indicated on the Academic Misconduct Report form and confirmed by the student's signature. Details of the alleged academic misconduct should be recorded on the form. Member/s of academic staff concerned should report the matter and the outcome to the relevant Registrar normally within five working days. The Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the matter is discussed with colleagues prior to the Programme Assessment Board. The PAB will take this into account when considering the mark to be awarded and the action to be taken, in accordance with section 4.4 below.
- 4.1.7 The student should also be given the opportunity at the Stage 1 meeting to declare academic misconduct in other work that they have submitted. The report to the Registrar should contain detail of any other academic misconduct declared and also a statement by the Programme Leader about any other cases of proven or admitted academic misconduct in the student's record. In cases of plagiarism, collusion or falsification, the report should also contain a statement from the first marker for the module on whether or not there is evidence of the learning outcomes for the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Friend' is as defined in the Handbook of Student Regulations, available [here](#)

assessment having been met by the student/s involved, despite the misconduct.

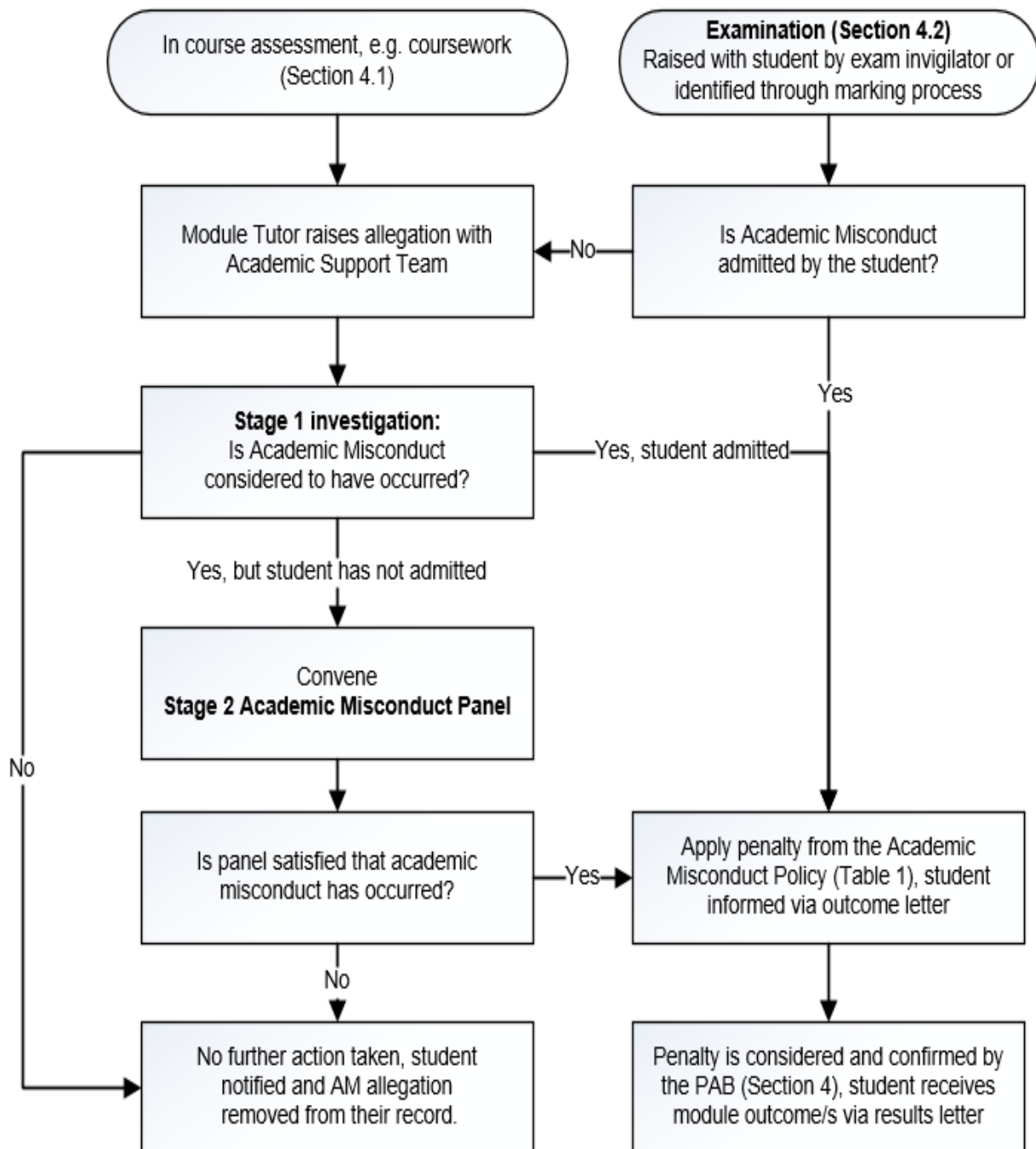
- 4.1.8 In the exceptional circumstances where a student judges that there had been a procedural error in stages 4.1.1 to 4.1.7, which resulted in them erroneously admitting to academic misconduct, they should immediately inform the Programme Leader that they now wish to withdraw their admission and contest the allegation of academic misconduct. Any such change of admission must be conveyed in writing to the Programme Leader within five working days of receiving the decision of the Stage 1 meeting. The Programme Leader will advise the Registrar and an investigation will be carried out by an Academic Misconduct Panel, according to section 4.3 below.
- 4.1.9 If this Stage 1 meeting does not resolve the matter, the member/s of staff concerned will then, within five working days or as soon as reasonably practicable following the discovery or allegation, report the matter in writing to the Registrar of the Faculty owning the module. The report should contain full details about the circumstances surrounding the alleged irregularity including, if appropriate, photographs of images or artefacts or photocopies of the student's work together with reports from plagiarism detection software where used. The Registrar will notify the student that a report has been made and that a Stage 2 investigation will be undertaken in accordance with section 4.3 below. The Registrar will initiate this process. Failure by the student/s to appear before the panel without reasonable explanation will not prevent the investigation proceeding and a decision being made.
- 4.1.10 An allegation of academic misconduct may be made after the work has been marked and returned to the student (see 4.4.8).
- 4.1.11 If a student believes academic misconduct to be taking place in any form of in-course assessment, it is their responsibility to bring this to the attention of the relevant Registrar.
- 4.2 Initial procedure for examinations
- 4.2.1 Where academic misconduct is suspected in an examination, the Invigilator concerned will inform the coordinating Invigilator, and in the presence of that colleague, inform the student of his/her suspicions and clearly annotate the student's script. The student will also be advised by the Invigilators that a full report will be submitted following the examination.
- 4.2.2 The Invigilators will seek to confiscate any relevant evidence (for example, any unauthorised material) and allow the student to continue with the examination. However, if the student persists with the irregularity s/he will be expelled from the room. The student will also be expelled from the room if s/he refuses to submit any suspected material to the Invigilators.
- 4.2.3 Immediately following the examination, the Invigilator, together with the coordinating Invigilator, will submit a full report of the matter using the Academic Misconduct Report Form. If academic misconduct is admitted, this should be indicated on the form and confirmed by the student's signature. This form will be returned to the Examinations Team along with the scripts and other examination stationery. The Examinations staff will





then ensure that the report is immediately sent to the Module Tutor for the module in question and the Registrar of the Faculty owning the module. The Invigilator's report should be accompanied by any relevant evidence.

- 4.2.4 If the student/s concerned has admitted to the academic misconduct at the point of being challenged by the Invigilators, then the Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the matter is reported to the next scheduled meeting of the Programme Assessment Board (PAB). The PAB will take this into account when considering the mark to be awarded and action to be taken, in accordance with section 4.4 below. The Registrar will also ensure that the PAB is informed of any other cases of academic misconduct on the student's record.
- 4.2.5 If the student disputes the allegation of misconduct then it is the responsibility of the Module Tutor to convene a Stage 1 meeting and follow the procedures as specified in 4.1 above. If this does not resolve the issue then the procedures for initiating a Stage 2 investigation specified in section 4.3 will be followed.
- 4.2.6 If a student believes academic misconduct to be taking place during an examination, it is their responsibility to bring this to the attention of the Invigilator. However, no further action can be taken unless the suspected academic misconduct is subsequently verified by the Invigilator
- 4.2.7 Where alleged academic misconduct is identified after an examination has taken place, the procedure set out in section 4.1 and, if necessary, section 4.3 will be followed.



#### 4.3 Stage 2: Academic Misconduct

4.3.1 Where an allegation of an academic misconduct has been made in accordance with section 4.1 or 4.2 and not admitted or resolved through the defined Stage 1 process, the matter will be investigated as soon as reasonably practicable following the discovery or allegation of the misconduct by an Academic Misconduct Panel to be convened comprising:

- i. The Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty which owns the module on which the misconduct is alleged to have taken place or their nominee (who must be a Head of Department or equivalent) – Chair.
- ii. two other members of staff, taken from a register of staff nominated for this purpose by Faculty Executive Group (FEG). Neither should have direct involvement with the module, the student or their programme and at least one should be from a Faculty other than that owning the module or from a University Service.

The Registrar for the Faculty owning the module (or nominee) will act as Secretary and Convenor of the Panel.

If the academic misconduct in question involves more than one student then the same Panel membership will consider each case.

4.3.2 Where there are also matters of professional suitability to be taken into account, it may be considered appropriate to combine the roles of the Academic Misconduct Panel and the Professional Suitability Board, to include representation from the relevant professional body as specified in the Handbook of Student Regulations [here](#)

4.3.3 The Academic Misconduct Panel Secretary will notify the members of the Panel and the student/s concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting of the Panel normally at least five working days in advance of the meeting. Notification should take place within five working days of receipt of the report, or as soon as reasonably practicable. If alleged misconduct comes to light during a set of examinations, and the candidate still has some examinations to sit, this timescale shall be extended to five working days after the end of that particular set of examinations.

4.3.4 If it is impractical for the meeting to be conducted on-site, the Panel should be conducted via telephone or video link and recorded.

4.3.5 The student/s will be provided by the Secretary with full details of the alleged misconduct and informed of his/her right to appear before the Panel, accompanied by a Friend<sup>2</sup> of his/her choice and to submit a written statement concerning the alleged misconduct. Failure by the student/s to appear before the Panel without reasonable explanation or to submit a

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<sup>2</sup> 'Friend' is as defined in the Handbook of Student Regulations, available [here](#)

statement will not prevent the investigation proceeding and a decision being made.

- 4.3.6 The Panel may call witnesses, as appropriate, to substantiate the allegations, and will not unreasonably refuse permission for the staff or student/s concerned to call such witnesses as they deem appropriate.
- 4.3.7 The Panel will interview the student/s, staff, and witnesses as appropriate, consider the student's written statement, and come to a decision on the basis of the student/s statement and the supporting evidence. The student/s will withdraw while the Panel deliberates.
- 4.3.8 The order of proceedings is as follows:
- i. statement of the case against the student/s, production of evidence in support of it and responses of those presenting that case to questions from the panel.
  - ii. statement of the case for the student/s, production of evidence in support of it and responses by the student/s to questions from the panel.
  - iii. reply to the case of the student/s.
  - iv. reply to the case against the student/s.
- 4.3.9 Evidence may be received by the Panel by oral statement, written and signed statement, or statutory declaration. The Chair of the Panel shall decide, after taking account of the evidence assembled, whether the evidence from each party can be heard in the other's presence.
- 4.3.10 Each member of the Panel has equal status and, in the event of a disagreement about the decision, the decision shall be made by a majority of panel members.
- 4.3.11 If the student/s has attended, he/she will be informed of the Panel's decision at the conclusion of the meeting. The Secretary will report the outcome in writing to the student/s normally within five working days of the Panel's decision.
- 4.3.12 If the conclusion of the Panel meeting is that academic misconduct has not occurred, this will be recorded on the Academic Misconduct Report Form and no further action will be taken. No report will be submitted to the PAB.
- 4.3.13 If the conclusion of the Panel meeting is that academic misconduct has occurred, the student/s should also be given the opportunity to declare academic misconduct in other work that they have submitted.
- 4.3.14 The student/s should be advised that they have the right to appeal against the finding of academic misconduct within ten working days of receiving the decision of the Academic Misconduct Panel.
- 4.3.15 The report by the Academic Misconduct Panel to the PAB shall include a statement (to be obtained from the Registrar of the student's home Faculty) about any other cases of proven or admitted academic misconduct in the

student's record. If the misconduct is one of plagiarism, collusion or falsification then the report should also contain a statement from the first marker for the module on whether or not there is evidence of the learning outcomes for the assessment having been met, despite the misconduct.

#### 4.4 Action by Programme Assessment Boards

- 4.4.1 If an Academic Misconduct Panel is satisfied that there has been academic misconduct, or if the student admits (under sections 4.1 or 4.2) that academic misconduct has taken place, the Programme Assessment Boards will take all the factors reported and evidence submitted into account in its consideration of the student's case and decide on action to be taken appropriate to the gravity of the case. This includes the power to fail the student for all or part of the assessment in respect of which an academic misconduct has been found to have occurred, and to determine whether the student should be permitted to continue on the programme with or without reassessment, or whether the student is not permitted to continue on the programme.
- 4.4.2 The decision in relation to the results of a module affected by the academic misconduct applying relevant action (see 4.4.5), should be determined prior to the PAB. It is the PABs responsibility to determine whether the student can continue on the programme in the light of the overall performance, and in the light of any recommendations.
- 4.4.3 Members of the Programme Assessment Board who have been involved with the formal investigation of the academic misconduct may contribute to the discussion of the matter by the Board, in order to provide contextual information, but may not be involved in the Board's decision on action to be taken. If the Programme Assessment Board Chair has been involved in the investigation, he/she should not chair the discussion.
- 4.4.4 The PAB will have regard to the guidelines in Table 1 in arriving at a decision on what action is appropriate (see 4.4.1).
- 4.4.5 It should be noted that the penalties detailed in Table 1 are guidelines which are expected to be followed in most cases. The final decision on the penalty rests with the Programme Assessment Board in the light of the details of the case.
- 4.4.6 Where matters of professional suitability have been considered by a joint academic and professional misconduct panel (see 4.3.2), the student may be subject to additional penalties as specified in the Handbook of Student Regulations available [here](#).
- 4.4.7 If a student is deemed to have failed a module because of academic misconduct, then the PAB cannot compensate the failure.
- 4.4.8 Where alleged academic misconduct comes to light after Programme Assessment Boards have met to consider a student's assessment, the procedure set out above in section 4.1 and, if necessary, section 4.3 will be followed. Programme Assessment Board consideration will follow as soon

as practicable following the receipt by the Registrar<sup>3</sup> of a report from the academic staff concerned or Academic Misconduct Panel. If the outcome of the Programme Assessment Board affects the student's final result, the Chair of the PAB will inform the student/s in writing of the reasons for the varied result and of his/her right of appeal. Such a reconsideration may take place at any time up to and after an award has been made.

- 4.4.9 In all cases where academic misconduct has been considered in respect of a student's assessment, a report should be forwarded to the Registrar of the student's home Faculty in writing, normally within five working days of the meeting. Cases of academic misconduct will be recorded on the student record system using an agreed code.

## 5 Student's right of appeal

- 5.1.1 The student has a right of appeal against the actual finding of academic misconduct as described in section 4.3.14.
- 5.1.2 The student has a right of appeal against the decision of the Programme Assessment Board (section 4.4) in accordance with the University's Appeals Procedures; see Handbook of Student Regulations [here](#)

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<sup>3</sup> or nominee

**Table 1 Guidelines on penalties for academic misconduct (see section 4.4.4)**
**If the misconduct is one of plagiarism, collusion, falsification or similar:**

	<b>Assessment criteria for assessment<sup>4</sup> on balance met despite the misconduct</b>	<b>Assessment criteria for assessment<sup>5</sup> not met (or insufficient evidence that they are met)</b>
<b>First instance of misconduct (to cover multiple instances if these have been declared under 4.1.7 or 4.3.13), student in level 4 or below</b>	Written warning plus a reduced mark for the assessment component. Referral and compensation are subject to the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards section 3.	Written warning plus a mark of zero for the assessment component. Referral and compensation are subject to the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards section 3.
<b>First instance of misconduct (to cover multiple instances if these have been declared under 4.1.7 or 4.3.13), student in level 5 or above</b>	Written warning plus mark reduced to the pass mark for the assessment component. Referral and compensation are subject to the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards section 3.	Written warning plus a mark of zero for the assessment component. The assessment will be referred if the candidate is eligible, even if the pass mark for the module overall has been achieved. Referral and compensation are subject to the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards section 3.
<b>Subsequent instance of misconduct</b>	Mark of zero for the module overall. PAB to consider whether candidate is required to withdraw from the programme or, if the candidate is in their final year, a reduction in award class beyond that which might follow from the failed module.	

**If the misconduct is one of cheating in an examination, personation, ghosting or similar:**

<b>First instance of misconduct (to cover multiple instances if these have been declared under 4.1.7 or 4.3.13), student in level 4 or below</b>	Written warning plus a mark of zero for the assessment component. Referral opportunity will normally be granted by PAB if the candidate is eligible. Normal compensation rules will apply to the referral opportunity (Academic Regulation for Taught Awards, section 3)	
<b>First instance of misconduct (to cover multiple instances if these have been declared under 4.1.7 or 4.3.13), student in level 5 or above</b>	Written warning plus a mark of zero for the module overall. Referral opportunity will normally be granted by PAB if the candidate is eligible. Normal compensation rules will apply to the referral opportunity (Academic Regulations for Taught Awards section 3)	
<b>Subsequent instance of misconduct</b>	Mark of zero for the module overall. PAB to consider whether candidate is required to withdraw from the programme or, if the candidate is in their final year, a reduction in award class beyond that which might follow from the failed module.	

<sup>4</sup> an assessment component defined on the module descriptor

<sup>5</sup> an assessment component defined on the module descriptor